

**Cambridgeshire Feasts Scrapbook 1897 to 1990**

Facts, Features and (occasional) Fallacies  
reported in Cambridge Newspapers

summarised by

Mike Petty

Most of these stories originally appeared in the Cambridge Daily/Evening/News or the  
Cambridgeshire Weekly News, its sister title.

They are supplemented by some articles published in the  
Cambridge Independent Press or Cambridge Chronicle

Most were featured in my ‘Looking Back’ column in the Cambridge News from 1996-2014

The complete ‘Cambridgeshire Scrapbook’ of which this is a small section is published online  
at [bit.ly/CambsCollection](http://bit.ly/CambsCollection)

I have digital and other copies of most of the stories summarised.  
I hope to publish these online one day. If you would like them in the meantime then please get  
in touch.

The original volumes are housed in the Cambridgeshire Collection at Cambridge Central  
Library where there are many other indexes dating back to 1770.

They also have detailed newspaper cuttings files on over 750 topics that have been compiled  
since the 1960s.

Newspapers sometimes get things wrong. I copy things out incorrectly. Do check

There are a multitude of spelling and layout errors. Please forgive or correct them

News never stops but this file was finished on 31 August 2016.

I will maintain supplements and corrections – contact me for anything you need

Please make what use of these notes that you may. Kindly remember where they came from

See my website – [www.mikepetty.org.uk](http://www.mikepetty.org.uk) for further notes.

Mike Petty, Stretham

2017

1898 06 24

Woodhurst was all astir on the occasion of the Church feast. The principal Street was gaily decorated with flags, and in a field close to the Church was a round-about, swings, coconut shying, and sweet stalls which were well patronise. A large number were present from the surrounding villages, and a strong contingent from St Ives who journeyed over in waggonettes, traps, and all sorts of vehicles. Bicyclists were also in strong evidence and a few even tramped the distance. 1898 06 24

1898 10 22

Four travelling hawkers were summoned for unlawfully driving a four wheel van on to the village green at Cottenham, contrary to the by-laws which had been posted in various parts of the village, including the village green. Lawyer for the defendants said it had been the custom to use the green on Sundays from time immemorial at the time of the village feast. He also pointed out that the defendants could neither read nor write. The magistrates said they were bound to support the parish council and fined defendants 10s.6d. 1898 10 22

1899 05 09

Village feasts have sadly degenerated of recent years, and that of Milton is a striking example. Years ago merry-go-rounds, shooting galleries, and coconut shies were erected, but this year there are only a couple of stalls, on which cheap toys and indigestible looking sweets are exposed for sale. In the licensed houses musicians play interminable polkas, which are danced more or less gracefully by country maidens and their swains. The feast is of three days' duration 1899 05 09

1899 07 04

One of the most popular of village feasts is that of Histon. This feast flourishes with surprising vigour and during its run the proprietors of roundabouts, shooting galleries and cocoanut shies draw no inconsiderable portions of their season's income from the villagers and visitors. The festival takes place on the village green and on Monday evening the usual holiday crowd amused itself after time-honoured fashion, notwithstanding the full inch of mud to wade through in some places 1899 07 04

1901 07 01

Histon's three-day feast opened in damp and unsettled weather. On feast Sunday there was the usual crowd of people parading the streets but it was not until the Monday that the feast proper began in real earnest. Hundreds braved the weather and took part in all the "fun of the fair". Young men and maidens, old men and their wives, rode on Messrs Thurston's every popular "steam" ostriches to the accompaniment of a full-throated steam organ playing all the latest popular airs. They hurled wooden balls at coconuts and entered into the light-hearted amusement until quite a late hour of the night 01 07 01

1904 10 13

The first step towards the abolition of Fulbourn Feast from the street was reached at a public meeting. The booths and stalls standing in the road were a great nuisance. The people in the caravans were not of the better class; they were a dirty lot and their sanitary arrangements were very bad. Little bags of filth were left about the street and proved very objectionable. Fulbourn was a respectable and clean village and it was a disgrace they should have such a state of things. No one could abolish the Feast altogether; they could have feasts every day on private premises. What they wanted was to abolish the feast in the street. 01 10 13

1904 10 21

Sir – the village feast is a danger to health with the carrying of infection from village to village from the sweets eaten, from the want of cleanliness among the van dwellers and the absence of sanitary appliances. A 'test your strength' appliance was erected opposite a house

in which a poor woman lies dying. The friends appealed to the owner not to use it because of the constant ear-splitting noise. Did this appeal influence the good feeling of the feastman? Not a bit of it and the noise continued without ceasing the whole evening. Is it right this kind of thing should continue? – F.L. Nicholls, Fulbourn 04 10 21

1906 06 29

Charles Mynott told the court he had gone on the shooting gallery at Castle Camps fair and paid for four shots, one did not go off and he accused the stallholder of trying to ‘dish’ him out of it. The man struck him in the mouth, knocked him down between two stalls then took a rifle in each hand and fired into the crowd of about 70 people. The stalls then fell over and the whole show wrecked. He did not see if the man took aim as he was on the floor 06 06 29

1906 07 03

The three-day Histon feast was the largest on record, consisting of Messrs Thurston’s ever-popular racing motor cars and their new Royal electric cinematograph exhibition, Mander’s menagerie and an unusual number of bottle and egg shooting saloons, strength testers, ‘Aunt Sallies’, cocoanut bowling alleys and other amusements. In the village Post Office the operator ahs been kept busy writing letters and sending off telegrams for the fair folk, many of whom cannot write. 06 07 03b

1907 10 05

There is no public house at Haddon in Huntingdonshire and it has long been the custom for a small committee to order barrels of beer which was served to the villagers and visitors in feast week in a tent where dancing and merrymaking took place. The brewer’s account was made out to ‘Haddon & Co’ and collections were made to pay for the beer. But now the Inland Revenue has fined the two labourers who stored the beer and took around the hat for selling it without a licence. Two men, aged 75 and 64, said the custom had existed al their lives, those who ordered the beer being recompensed by all the villagers. 07 10 05b

1908 01 24

A remarkable case occupied the attention of Ely magistrates when an assistant schoolmistress summonsed a Cottenham farmer in respect to the paternity of her child. Last year she’d obtained an order against the brother of the present defendant but now it appeared that she must have been mistaken. The two had met at Stretham feast but witnesses were unable to say which brother they’d seen her with as there was a great likeness between them 08 01 24c

1908 05 29

A pitched battle was fought at Hauxton feast upon the platform of a steam roundabout going round at full speed. While the villagers confined themselves to nature’s weapons, the showmen resorted to sticks and heated irons taken from the boiler of the engine. Women children in their arms who were taking rides upon the whirligig tumbled haphazard from their mounts to escape the turmoil, terrified out of their wits at the sight of the two factions fighting like wild animals. CWN 08 05 29 p3

1908 07 10

Histon’s three days’ Feast included Thurston’s new Royal show of animated pictures and their steam racing motor cars. Two other roundabouts of a less pretentious order claimed full attention from the youngsters as did an unusual number of bottle and egg and rifle shooting saloons, strength-testers, ‘Aunt Sallies’ and cocoa-nut shies. Then there were ice-cream, confetti, rock (Histon all through) and fish stalls by the score as well as a Temperance tent where light refreshment was obtained at reduced prices. CWN 08 07 10

1909 07 16

Cricket matches were the chief attraction at Conington feast. The Tuesday match against Knapwell was sadly interfered with by a heavy downpour of rain during which the teams

were entertained to tea at the White Swan. On Wednesday the opposition was Fen Drayton whose veteran, T. Johnson, is a bowler of the 'googly' order. Although the pitch was too wet and soft to suit him, he was practically unplayable CEN 09 07 16

1910 07 08

Histon Feast, the largest in the county, began on Monday for three days. Thurston's Royal Show and steam motors did the lion's share of the business although the various hoop-la stalls, rifle-shooting saloons and a couple of small roundabouts came in for much attention as did the 'Live Teddy Bear' cave. Plenty of patrons congregated round a cheap jewellery auctioneer who was kept busy knocking down bargains to villagers. The scene was an animated one until close upon midnight – 10 07 08cc

1910 07 08

There has been an exceptionally large attendance of show people at Boxworth feast, no less than 17 vans putting in an appearance. A roundabout, shooting gallery, cocoanut shies, stalls etc have all been well patronised. One inhabitant residing near the feast grounds cut his hedge so neatly and level that the proprietor of the roundabout asked permission to use it as a table on which to place cockshy bottles. The villagers and their friends have had a happy time, notwithstanding the unsettled weather. 10 07 08g

1910 10 14

Relations and friends arrived in Willingham for the annual and much-looked-forward-to Feast. During the afternoon the yearly parade of the Friendly Societies marched round the village with the band of the People's Mission bringing up the rear. Young men collected on behalf of Addenbrooke's Hospital. The week has been given over to gaiety. Thurston's motor roundabouts and shows, swings, stalls etc were greatly in evidence but the weather was unfavourable and many visitors from surrounding villages were kept away - 10 10 14d

1911 06 02

Swavesey feast cannot be recorded as having been a success. The attendance of visitors from neighbouring villages was unusually small and there was an absence of incidents of interest. One gentleman in his shirt sleeves drove a family round the feast in a small donkey cart and caused a little amusement as every few yards the donkey declined to budge and had to be pushed or lifted by the kindly feast folk. On Monday a little child fell from its father's arms when riding a roundabout and struck the revolving platform. But the only injury was a small scratch on the leg 11 06 02d

1911 10 13

St Ives Michaelmas horse fair was held in East Road and Quadrant. The fraternity were very much in evidence and shouting excitedly over prospective deals. These were not very numerous as business was very slow. There was much better attendance in the Cattle Markets but the trade for store stock was very slow owing to the shortage of keep and having to buy feeding stuffs at greatly-increased prices. The pleasure part of the fair, with the various shows, was quite as large as usual 11 10 13

1911 10 13

Sunday was the first day of the annual Willingham Feast and the village was visited by the largest crowd on record during Feast-time. The chief interest centred in the Salvation Army and the People's Mission bands who kept the village in a lively state from early morning until nine o'clock at night. There was a procession of 2,000 persons accompanied by an army of collectors wearing Addenbrooke's Hospital sashes who visited every house. In the evening the usual service was held in the Tabernacle, every inch of standing room being occupied 11 10 13a

1912 05 17

Swavesey parish council considered whether to postpone the village feast in view of the outbreak of scarlet fever in Market Street. It was their duty to prevent the spread of the disease by visitors and the show people carrying infection away with them. Perhaps Thurston's could sprinkle the platforms of their roundabouts with disinfectant and disinfect the money given them. It was agreed to place advertisements in the Weekly News warning visitors and urging parents not to allow their children to attend. 12 05 17f

1912 05 24

The warnings about scarlet fever had the effect of keeping both visitors and show people away and Swavesey feast can hardly be said to have taken place at all. On Sunday the streets were quieter than usual, on Monday just three stalls and a cocoanut shy were erected. An enterprising tradesman from Cambridge put in an appearance but soon packed up, disappointed. With the exception of a religious meeting in Market Street on Sunday night, cricket matches at which the attendance was small, were the only gatherings of interest. The team from Hilton arrived four men short but played well. Despite rumours that five persons had died of the fever it has only been the mildest infection. 12 05 24j

1912 05 24

Swavesey feast – 12 05 24j

1912 07 12

Dr Barnardo's Homes – 12 07 12j

1912 07 12

Balsham feast thrives – 12 07 12k

1912 09 06

An Ely Diocesan report on the amusements of the working classes records that people in small parishes 'Dulled with monotony, and weary with the day's toil, find the slow gossip of the public house less of a strain than even the simplest lectures or music. Feasts do a great deal of harm and cinematograph shows do nothing to cultivate the intelligence. The apathy of village life rests like a fog upon the young men. Most of the girls are away in service, and for those who remain the lanes are not safe in the evenings' 12 09 06j & k

1912 10 11

Willingham Feast has been a 'full' one. The Green was packed with attractions including Thurston's cinematograph show, roundabouts, ostriches, shooting galleries and a joy-wheel which caused great fun and was fully appreciated. Sunday being the first day of the feast special services were held by the People's Mission. The local band was assisted by a mission band from Cambridge and a large number of people were attracted to the open-air gatherings. Collections were taken on behalf of Addenbrooke's Hospital 12 10 11h

1913 05 02

Aldreth feast p11

1913 05 23

Haddenham Feast and Friendly Society parade p11

1913 05 30

Waterbeach Friendly Societies parade – Feast

1913 06 27

Soham feast parade, p10

1913 06 27

Mrs Elizabeth Pont and her late husband were familiar figures at fairs and feasts for miles around where their stall of feast rock etc was always to be found. For over 40 years she took her stall on Histon village green at exactly the same place where her goods were always sought by a large number of visitors 13 06 27 p12 CIP

1914 04 17

Villages have changed dates of feast since 1753 – 14 04 17f

1914 05 29

Waterbeach feast – 14 05 29g, h

1914 06 19

Feast. The feast was held at Lolworth this week, and many friends and relatives of the villagers assembled as usual to greet old friends and acquaintances. There were the usual stalls and swingboats for the edification of the younger generation. On Monday, Lolworth played Swavesey at home in a cricket match, and were defeated by one run. – 1914 06 19 CIPof

1914 06 26

Soham feast week p10

1914 07 10

Histon feast: Police banned the abominable water squirt with which young ladies attracted the attention of the lads. But there was no lack of frivolity, the paper reported with gay ‘flappers’ greatly assisting the merriment. Who minded a tickle under the chin with a feather or a handful of confetti in one’s face when it came from a pretty young Miss? Thurston’s ‘switch-back railway’ and ‘jolly joy wheel’ were on the green together with photographers and artists supplying pencil portraits. Every merchant seemed to be doing a big business. & p4

1914 10 09

Willingham Feast Sunday

1914 10 30

Sergt Lander told magistrates he visited Charles Thurston’s cinematograph show on the Green at Cottenham Feast. There were 200 people inside but the five fire exists were covered with thick curtains and not illuminated. Mr Thurston said it was only a temporary building but was one of the best constructed in the country. Next night the lights had been put up. Another proprietor, William Biddall from London, was summoned for a similar offence. Both were fined 14 10 30

1916 05 17

Sequel to Milton Feast. At Cambs Divisional Bench on Saturday, a Biggleswade man was summoned for selling cigarettes to a boy under the age of 16 years at Milton on May 9. Evidence was given by the boy, who said his age was 13. He stated that defendant was in charge of a stall at Milton Feast. There was a board at the back of the stall to which cigarette packets were fastened. By throwing darts, sold at two a penny and transfixing the packets they might be won. He won 10 packets but did not smoke any of the cigarettes. A constable said he saw defendant and told him that cigarettes must not be sold to boys under 16. Ten other boys, whose ages ranged from seven to 13, were seen smoking in the village. Defendant said he thought the boys took the cigarettes home to their fathers. The magistrates imposed a fine of 10s. 16 05 07

1916 07 05

Histon Feast Sunday. That there was a smaller attendance than in previous years at the Histon Parade held on Feast Sunday was not a matter to be wondered at, so many Histon and Impington lads- husbands, fathers, sweethearts - having voluntarily answered the call and come forward to take their part in the titanic struggle being waged on the Continent. There was hardly a man of military age to be seen on Sunday, but the older people, and the younger, too, gave ungrudgingly in response to this annual appeal on behalf of Addenbrooke's Hospital. The parade was well organised and the officials deserve heartiest congratulation on the success of the efforts. 16 07 05

1917 06 06

Feast. In common with other villages, there is a poor show this year (at Bottisham); the old custom will no doubt remain in abeyance during the war. On Sunday there were not so many visitors as usual, though the weather was gloriously fine. On Monday and Tuesday there were a few stalls, but the roundabouts were conspicuous by their absence. 17 06 06

1920 07 03

Battle of bottles between two whelk merchants at Trumpington feast 20 07 03

1924 06 07

The landlord of the New Inn Swavesey was summoned for riding a cycle without a light. It was on the night of the village feast and he was seen hanging on to a motor cycle, with two other cyclists at the time. Defendant explained that he lit his lamp against the Black Horse. He took hold of his friend's shoulder, who was on a motor cycle, and his light went out against the Sun public house owing to a bump in the surface of the road, where it was being repaired. Fined 5s. c24 06 07

1926 05 20

Stretham annual feast was in progress when an 11-year-old boy ran from behind a stall and attempted to cross the road. At the same time a large motor van was passing and before any warning could be given the boy slipped under the wheels, which passed over his body. Dr Howe was sent for immediately and the boy, under the care of P.C. Waghorn, was removed in an ambulance to Addenbrooke's Hospital where he lies in an extremely critical condition 26 05 20

1926 06 30

Last Sunday was observed as Feast Sunday at Stuntney when £14 10s.3d and 457 eggs were collected for Addenbrooke's Hospital by the villagers. This is an extremely creditable effort in view of the small population. This year a horse-drawn wagon was decorated with evergreens and flowers by members of the Mothers' Union. The vehicle, which was lent by Mr Ambrose and driven by Walter Fretwell, represented a hospital ward. A procession headed by the church choir marched through the village singing hymns 26 06 30

1926 10 22

Soham Parish Council say that as their fair and feast were still wanted by the public the question of its abolition did not arise. Enquiries showed that many years ago the tolls had been taken by the Lord of the Manor, but certainly during the past 50 years he had neither taken tolls nor exercised any control. They have no knowledge by what rights the stalls are placed in the highway though a search had been made of old parish books and documents 26 10 22

1927 07 21

A showman was convicted for obstructing free passage of High Street, Lode. A farmer said he was driving his car and had to pull up as a roundabout was half-way across the road and a crowd of people and little children near by. A fair had a definite legal origin but a feast was

an individual enterprise by proprietors of the amusements and there was no possible right to obstruct the highway. But at Bottisham the feast was held opposite the church and a feast and a fair were really one and the same. It was an occasion where the inhabitants who had left the village came back for a short time. He had visited for ten years and had a statement signed by the vicar and most of the inhabitants who were in favour of the feast being held on the same spot 27 07 21

1928 05 21

Herbert Spalding, parish constable of Landbeach, said he went to Milton feast and had a turn at a penny-in-the-slot machine. He started with 7d and got down to a penny but then won 8d and finished with 3d profit. He found it better to let the machine run and not press the controls. There were 15 automatic machines in the booth and men, women, boys and girls were using them. Some players used the knobs and some did not; it did not seem to make any difference. The games were chance and not skill. A fine of 5s was imposed on the proprietor 28 05 21

1931 07 10

The annual Histon Feast Sunday parade was most disappointing, very few members of the friendly societies put in an appearance and there were no decorated vans or wagons. The Cottenham and Histon Salvation Army Bands stopped en route to play selections and there was a large crowd on the village green for the open-air meeting and the sacred promenade concert in the evening 31 07 10a

1934 08 02

A Warboys couple, Mr & Mrs Edward Upchurch have both forgotten the date of their wedding, 60 years ago. They mark the event by the fact that it was during feast week in the village that they were joined in matrimony and the feast week custom has never been broken. They were both born in the village and have lived in the area all their lives, bringing up 14 children of whom nine live to share their diamond wedding. At one time Mr Upchurch, a land worker, received only a shilling a week and the family gleaned at harvest to bake their own bread. 34 08 02

1935 07 05

The tenant of the Red Lion at Trumpington had been there since 1916. If the licence was taken away he would be deprived of his livelihood & the Red Lion Self-Help Club would be broken up, magistrates heard. There were 34 allotment holders on ground belonging to the pub and half the allotment land in the village had already been lost on account of building. It was an old-fashioned house, very quiet and homely and the Feast was held in a field at the rear. They served teas to anybody who asked for them, but not much beer. The licence was renewed 35 07 05b

1936 05 20

Stretham feast parade – 36 05 20

1939 12 23

Daguerreotype photographs were expensive and it was not until 1851 that a cheaper process came along. This was the collodion positive invented by Mr F. Scott Archer of Bishop's Stortford who died in 1857. These were framed portraits on glass and they were made in thousands at feasts in Cambridgeshire villages and on the beach at the seaside. One of the most notable makers was a Cambridge man called Dick Hutchinson who lived somewhere on the East Road and worked Yarmouth beach every summer. He had no studio in Cambridge. 39 12 23a

1941 07 11

Suspension of Feast. For the first time, it is believed, since its establishment many centuries ago, there were no outward and visible signs of the annual village feast (at Melbourn) during the first week in July, and this caused great disappointment in many quarters, as its suspension had not been announced. The decision not to hold the feast was not arrived at until the night before the stalls, etc. were due to appear. Many visitors carne to the village from the surrounding district last Friday and Saturday, as during recent years the event has been one of the largest and most popular in South Cambridgeshire. The absence of the feast was not due to diminishing interest, but rather due to transport difficulties, petrol rationing and other war-time conditions. Feast Sunday, however, was well observed, many visitors coming into the village to see old friends-talk over old times, and to find home-made cakes and wines, for which Melbourn housewives are noted, up to pre-war standard. 41 07 11

1942 05 22

No Feast. That ancient festival Swavesey Feast, should have been celebrated this week, but owing to the war, it had to lapse. Not one showman's caravan put in an appearance, and visitors have been conspicuous by their absence. There have been no cricket matches, and no entertainment. 42 05 22

1943 10 22

Married Sixty Years. Mr and Mrs. William Gifford, of Histon Road, Cottenham, celebrated their diamond wedding on Feast Tuesday. They were married on October 16, 1883, on Feast Tuesday, of the old village feast week at the parish church by the Rev Mr Barker, and they have lived in Cottenham all their married life. Mr Gifford is 83 and Mrs Gifford is 79. They are both hale and hearty and are a grand old type of country people. Mr. Gifford has completed 75 years' work on the land, and can still be seen every fine day working on his plot of land, and in the summer, with Mrs. Gifford, gathering in the fruit and vegetable crops, including the back aching task of picking strawberries. In his younger days he was an expert ploughman, and won several prizes at local ploughing matches. Of their family of five, two sons and a daughter are surviving, and they have one grandson. They lost one son in the last war and one son died previously to that. They spent a happy time on Tuesday with members of their family gathered around them. 43 10 22

1947 07 10

Sir. This week Histon villagers should normally be celebrating the traditional age-old annual Feast, but alas! When the children and their accompanying parents assembled to partake in the amusements that one is accustomed to find pitched on the village green, they found this pleasant open space as bare as Mother Hubbard's cupboard. Excepting for one or two years during the war the oldest inhabitant states that she never remembers the showmen missing Histon feast and the family of Thurston have always been associated with the festival. The Histon council includes many people who have migrated to the village and personally have no room for such traditional customs as village feasts. – letter 47 07 10

1944 07 14

Village Feast. According to an ancient custom, Melbourn's annual three-day feast commences on the first Thursday in July, but so little had previously been heard of the event this year that little or no feast was expected, mainly because of war-time restrictions of one kind or another. We have to record, however, the coming of one of the largest, liveliest and best patronised feasts for many years - within living memory, some old villagers say. 44 07 14

*The Cambridgeshire Collection has newspaper cuttings from 1958*

1962 07 09

St Mary's Church, Swaffham Bulbeck, held a parade to mark the feast of St Peter, reviving a ceremony that has not been celebrated for 30 years. Led by Burwell Band, members of the British Legion, Fire Brigade, Sunday School and Mother's Union processed round the village, stopping five times for the band to play. The parade was followed by a flower-decked hay cart depicting the carpentry and stone mason's tools being used in the restoration of the south aisle of the church 62 07 02a

1962 12 04

The landlord of the Golden Lion public house in the quiet village of Bourn is trying to start an old-time version of the 'ten pin bowling' craze in the pub car park. Jack Allison recently found four 200-year-old skittles in the debris of an old barn. Peter Ingle, 86, remembers that over 70 years ago the game was played in an open-ended carriage shed during Bourn Feast when every farmer expected his workers to be away from the farm for 10 days. But the skittles are now riddled with woodworm and may not stand up to the wear and tear of regular use. 62 12 04

1973 03 24

The Stretham Sunday feast parade which appeared in jeopardy earlier this week will go on the Rev John Hornby said yesterday. Fears that the feast might be cancelled grew when Mrs Lottie Wright of Eric Wright Haulage of High Street Stretham said they would not be helping any fund-raising activities in the village. Mrs Wright told the annual parish meeting she thought remarks made by councillors about her firm's safety record were "libellous" and this was why she pulled out. But Mr Hornby, the village rector said he had an offer of alternative vehicles for the May parade within 24 hours of the announcement 73 03 24

1981 12 08

Diners dressed in smocks will consume bowls of celery and potato soup, followed by gammon and spinach with fluffy herb dumplings, potatoes and Fen carrots and ginger pumpkin pie. They will finish with frummety, a traditional Swavesey feast week recipe, wheat with raisings, currants and sultanas. The dulcimer playing of Jenny Mallindine will aid their digestion. The meal is in aid of the Cambridge Folk Museum which is faced with ever-increasing costs 81 12 08a

1989 05 25

Beatrice Stevens was born in the village of Stretham in 1907 and has chronicled events in the small community in her charming book 'Stretham: a Feast of Memories'. She was the daughter of a local farmer and insurance agent, who attended, then taught in the village school before much later becoming its manager and chairman of governors. She writes about the four butchers, the doctor who came from Haddenham six days a week, the opposition to a village nurse and the highlight of the year – the village feast which is still celebrated today. This Feast Sunday she sat beside the village cross signing copies of her new book. 89 05 25c

1990 02 05

I like Hilton because I know everybody. I like going through the ford and the water goes all over the car. We have feast week and do all sorts of things like bingo and my dad is a beastly boy and we have a raffle. Sometimes I feed the ducks. Hilton is a nice village but it does have its disadvantages. The Potton road always has traffic going across it and it is dangerous to cross especially if you want to go to the shop. There is a village hall where the toddlers go to the playgroup. Hilton school closed in 1955 and since then children have gone by bus to school in Fenstanton (children's impressions of their village) 90 02 05f